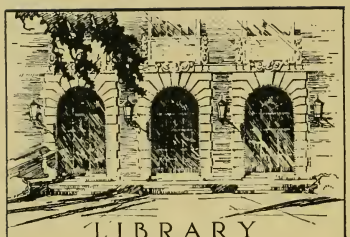

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cases in which any Clergyman, Office-bearer, or Trustee of the Church, residing in the Diocese and subject to the jurisdiction of the Court, is charged with any ecclesiastical offence. The Bishop shall appoint a Chancellor of the Diocese to preside, a Church Advocate to conduct proceedings for the Church, and a Registrar of the Diocese. He may only remove these by the consent of the Diocesan Synod. With the concurrence of the Synod the Bishop shall also appoint not less than four Clergymen and four Laymen to be Assessors of the Bishop's Court, and to hold office for three years. II. The second part of this Statute regulates the proceedings before trial, and in cases where no trial is needed. III. The third part of the Statute arranges the proceedings at and after trial. IV. The fourth part consists of miscellaneous provisions.

10. This Statute defines Ecclesiastical Offences, and the punishments thereof.

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The De-Christianising

OF

THE COLLEGES OF OXFORD.

(Reprinted from the Standard of October 27, 1868.)

BY

THE PRINCIPAL OF ST. MARY'S HALL.

"Prithee, peace, man," said the Baron. "We of the Laity care not what you set up, so you pull merrily down what stands in our way."

The Monastery—SCOTT.

RIVINGTONS

LONDON, OXFORD, AND CAMBRIDGE

1869

Price Twopence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

—

Sir,

I have selected my heading deliberately.

The effect, whatever may be the intention, of Mr. Coleridge's Bill, should it pass into an Act, can be, under the present circumstances of this University, nothing less.

That Bill proposes a change which will make it possible for the members of any College, Head and Fellows alike, to have no religious belief in common.

Now there are those amongst us, and there is a very large body in the country, who are not prepared, as yet at all events, to renounce Christianity for themselves, and who therefore do not desire to see each College placed under conditions under which, practically, Christianity either cannot be taught or must be taught under tremendous disadvantages.

If Mr. Coleridge's Bill had been passed some thirty-five years since, it might have been viewed as a harmless Utopian measure of no practical effect. But it is not so now. In many cases the

principles of the Electors to Fellowships would give to Mr. Coleridge's measure it's full effect.

Take, in conjunction with this fact, the large proportion of lay Fellows, (who, under Mr. Coleridge's beneficent Bill, are to commit themselves to nothing in the way of religious Belief,) and the movement going on to increase their number[a]: what security is left that even the bare profession of Christianity will be considered as an essential qualification of the teachers and (what is far more) the trainers of the next generation of Oxford men?

> "It is thy destiny,
> Which for it's very greatness we must bear,
> To be a nation's heart thou City dear!
> Sending the pure blood from thee every year."
>
> (*Faber.*)

This was the old conception of the function of Oxford.

The blood she must, any how, send from her every year. But what kind of blood under the conditions which Mr. Coleridge proposes?

I am content to assume, for the purpose of my argument, that all true Christian teaching is equally pure—I am not seeking to fight the battle of the Church of England. I want to ask all Christian men in England—first, whether they

[a] And, I may add now, to throw open the Headships of Colleges to Laymen thus discharged from all religious obligation.

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wish our Colleges to be Christian? next, whether they think the Christian training of their sons will be safe so soon as the Bodies of men to whom that training must be committed may by law consist of persons of whose belief they can know nothing?

I do not fight the battle of the University.

In face of the circumstances of the time, looking to our numberless and ever-increasing divisions, I cannot say I think it an unreasonable demand that our Universities should be open to all British Citizens irrespectively of their religious or non-religious sentiments.

In "Society" we meet, and meet harmlessly, any one who does not contravene the exceedingly easy requirements of "Society." But a man thinks twice before he admits people into his own family circle.

It is the same in Politics. Men of all shades of opinion meet one another amicably in daily life: but a Ministry must, if it is to hold together, be formed of men who, to a great extent, agree upon political questions.

Yet it is proposed that our Colleges should hereafter be liable to be composed of men selected simply for intellectual gifts, no two of whom may agree upon questions vital to Christianity itself!

What could be the result but an utter indifferentism at the best? May it not be that such a system would expose young unformed minds to the peril of utter unsettlement of religious belief?

It may be true that matured minds gain in strength and solidity of conviction by being exposed to rough contact with other minds. It is possible that some minds, even among the young, may survive such an ordeal. But, as Whately said upon hard training, it is possible that "the hardiness of the survivors is the cause, not the effect, of their having lived through such a training."

At all events, do religious Parents in this country wish to have the experiment tried?

I do not forget the argument that Tests are a snare to the scrupulous while the dishonest accept and evade them. It would be difficult to forget it when men are found to say, without a blush, "I have taken all your Tests and yet I believe nothing."

No doubt we are indebted, in some measure, for our present dangers to the needless multiplication of Tests. Now the pendulum goes to the opposite extreme. But, unless honesty has vanished before Intellectualism, surely a man can say whether or not he accepts the Apostles' Creed: and, if he does not, can he complain that he is not admitted to power and influence (to say nothing of profit) in a Christian Institution?

Many Oxford men will recall the example, more praised than followed, of one who, feeling himself no longer in harmony with the System which gave him both, threw both up, and, of his own free will,

went out to do battle with the world "disestablished and disendowed."

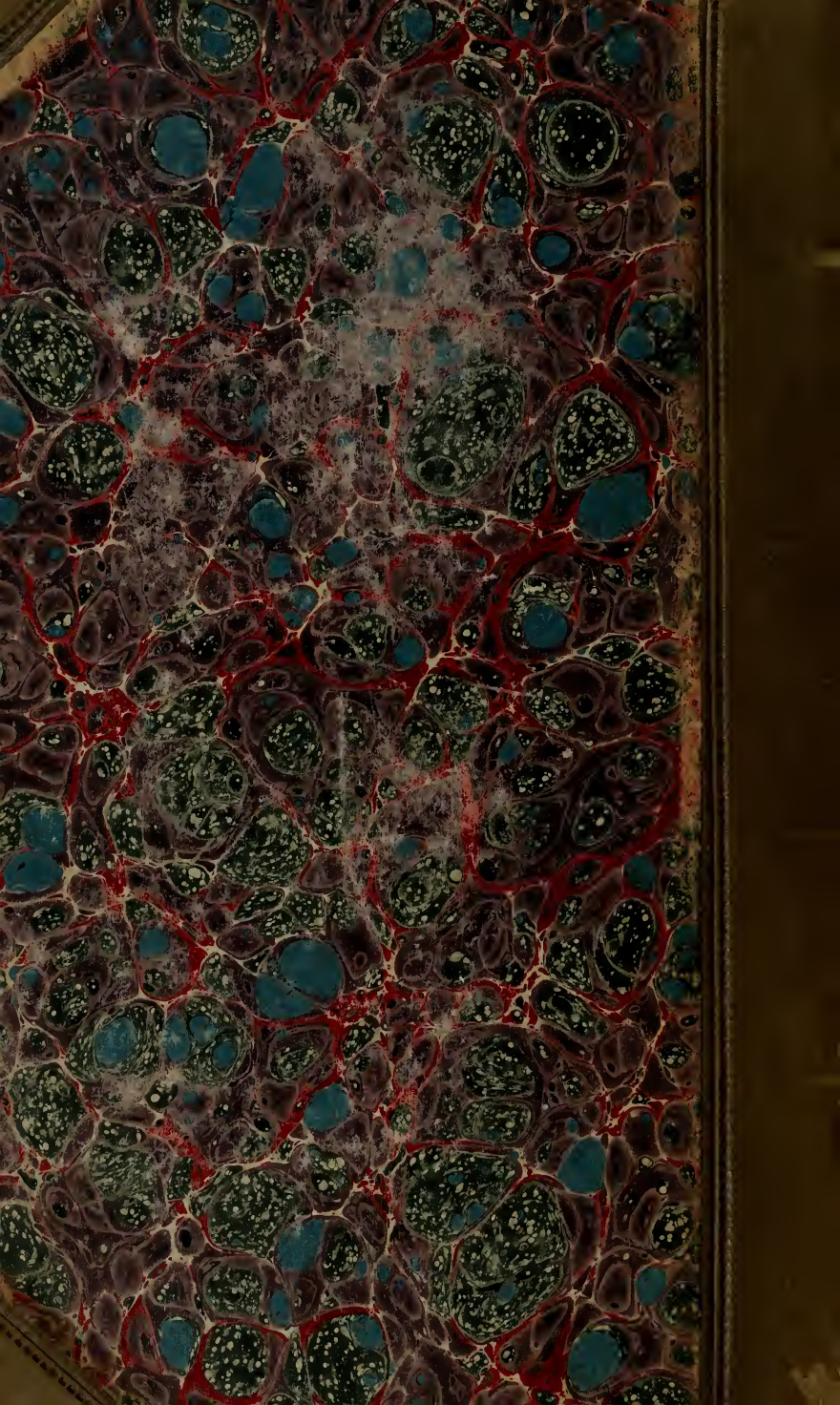
I may shock your Conservative Principles but—I wish to add that I do not even fight for the exclusive possession of our Endowments.

If I were the owner of a pure abundant Stream around which had grown up a large Population, I should see no injustice in being compelled (were I selfish enough to need the compulsion) to allow my neighbours to draw from it for their wants; but I should protest against their being allowed to muddy the source, so that I could no longer drink of it myself. If the time has come that the Church of England can no longer fairly retain exclusive possession of Academical Endowments, give a share to such Bodies as recommend themselves to the National Will. It is not much to ask that the Church of England shall retain the remainder under the only conditions which can render their retention of the slightest value.

* * * *

I am, Sir,

Your's faithfully,

D. P. Chase.

Oxford,
Oct. 24.